

REPORT
UPON A
PROPOSED SYSTEM
OF
PUBLIC EDUCATION,
FOR THE
CITY OF NASHVILLE,
RESPECTFULLY ADDRESSED TO ITS CITIZENS.

"The Property of the people must secure the Education of the people."

NASHVILLE:
W. F. BANG & CO., PRINTERS.
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Nashville, June 10, 1848

PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTION.

CORPORATION OF NASHVILLE.

At a meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for the City and Corporation of Nashville, at the City Hall, on the 8th of June, 1848, the following Preamble and Resolution was introduced by Mr. Allison, the Mayor, (Alderman Stout being in the Chair,) to wit:

At a meeting of our citizens at the Methodist Church in this city, on last evening, to hear an Address from Professor Ingraham, on Public Schools, and the establishing of one in our city. After the reading of the address, the Rev. J. B. McFerran rose, and moved that the Mayor and Aldermen of this city be requested to have the address published in pamphlet form, for the use of all our citizens—which motion was unanimously carried by the meeting. Therefore, to comply with the request of said meeting, the following resolution was offered, to wit:

Resolved by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Nashville, That Professor Ingraham be requested to furnish this Board with a copy of his address, delivered by him on last evening, at the Methodist Church, to a number of our citizens on the subject of Public Schools, and the establishment of one in our city, and that the same be published in pamphlet form for the use of all our citizens:

Which was unanimously adopted, and on motion of Alderman Sloan, the Mayor and Mr. Knowles were appointed a Committee to carry out the above.

Attest.

WM. GARRETT, *Recorder.*

June 8, 1848.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NASHVILLE, June 10, 1848.

Dear Sir:—We have been appointed a Committee by the Board of Aldermen of this city, to request of you a copy of your address delivered before a number of our citizens, at the Methodist Church, on Wednesday evening, the 7th inst., on the subject of Public Schools and the importance of establishing such a system in our city.

The object of the Board in making such a request, is to have it published in pamphlet form for the use of all our citizens who may feel an interest in a system so beneficial; and we have no doubt it will be read with much interest by all.

Hoping that you will feel it your duty to comply with the request, we remain most respectfully, yours.

ALEX. ALLISON,

J. B. KNOWLES,

Committee.

To J. H. INGRAHAM, Esq.

REPLY.

NASHVILLE, June 9, 1848.

GENTLEMEN:—The address, a copy of which you, as "a Committee appointed by the Board of Aldermen of this city," have done me the honor to request for publication, is most cheerfully surrendered to your disposal.

The manner in which the citizens have risen up, as one man, to meet the subject of Public Schools now offered to their acceptance, as well as the large and liberal spirit shown by the Mayor and Common Council cannot but delight the heart of every friend of Universal Free Education.

The high position they have taken in the outset is the precursor of success. They have shown that they appreciate the importance of the proposed System of Public Schools, and are worthy to be sharers in its privileges and blessings. Their example will encourage other laborers in the cause, and must awaken in the cities and towns of Tennessee a spirit of kindred ambition, which, it is to be hoped, will result in the establishment of Free Schools throughout the State.

I am, gentlemen,

Very respectfully your ob't serv't,

J. H. INGRAHAM.

To ALEX. ALLISON, Esq. }
J. B. KNOWLES, Esq. } Committee.

ADDRESS

FELLOW-CITIZENS:

You have been invited here this evening, for the purpose of lending your attention to a subject in which every citizen of a free government is deeply interested.

The grand lever that shall move the world, is Public Education! It will shake the thrones of despotism till they fall. Tyranny must fly before it like night before the dawn. It is the bulwark of liberty and the conservative element of a Republic. It unrivets the shackles of oppression, and banishes crime and wrong from the earth. It is a mighty moral influence that is destined to revolutionize the globe, and fit man for the highest condition of enjoyment.

An eminent philosopher has said, "The Cross and the Press are the engines that shall elevate mankind to the rank and intelligence which the race was created to hold in the Universe." Add to these two, the Public School, and the trinity of reforming and elevating power will be complete.

The school is the rock in which the Cross must be planted. The Press grows out of the school as the fruit grows out of the branch. The press appeals not to the letterless but to the educated. Were the people untaught the press would be powerless. The *idea* suggested by a book or a newspaper is a *reader*!

The Cross, through the Bible, appeals to those who are learned; that is, the religion of Divine revelation presupposes knowledge of reading—takes for granted the education of the masses to whom it appeals. The school leads to the cross! the press, standing between the two, unites them like the riveting link in a chain.

The Public School is a consequence and the *objective* of the Bible. Education is clearly intended by its DIVINE FRAMER: else such passages as these which follow mean nothing:

"He that runs may *read*." "Know ye not the Scriptures?"

"Blessed is he that *readeth* the words of this prophecy."
Rev. i. 3.

"Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."

"When you *read* you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." Ephes. iii. 4.

The prophets are commanded every where to write! "Write! thus saith the Lord! Write, thus saith the Lord."

St. John is commanded by the angel of the Revelation to write all that he shall dictate to him.

Shall there be given *writings*, and yet no *readers*?

The prophecies and laws that came from God were not *idly* given. Does an artist paint and lay on colors for the blind? That the pages of the book of Holy Writ were to be read, studied, searched, was as much a part and end of the Divine purpose as the writing them. The effect was irresistably to follow the cause!

God never causes without results in view! Therefore, in commanding the Bible to be written with pen and ink, he had in view the education of mankind, and as much ordained it as he ordained the laws and precepts themselves, which he directed his prophets and apostles to put into writing. The sower looks to the harvest! The writer looks to the reader! The BIBLE looks to the school!

In a word, learning to read on the part of mankind is necessary to give completeness to the word of God. The Bible, glorious and divine as it is, is wholly dependant upon a consequence which might, or might not be, for its value and power; or, in other words, upon schools being established on the earth! In the same Divine mind from which emanated the precepts of the law and gospel, there must have been conceived and ordained human education; or, to come now to our point, *schools must have originated with God, and come from God!*

Directed and influenced by Him who dictated to the prophets His sacred word, men, seemingly acting by their own volition, founded schools and educated their generations. But few, however, of the race were thus favored. The education was individual, rather than universal. Yet, as the Bible was given to all, of course its Giver intended all should be taught to read it, each for himself, and not another for him; for the salvation being "a common salvation," its sources should be common to all interested in it, which is every man.

The world is 6,000 years old! It is nearly 2,000 years since the gospel of Christ was written and published to men; yet, comparatively but few men in an age have been able to read it, every one for himself as God intend he should do! "How could I read it, never having learned?" may be the apologetic response of millions in every century. And how could they learn without schools? and how can there be schools without

teachers? and how can there be teachers without employers? To the great mass of the race in christian lands the Bible has remained a *sealed book*. This result has *fallen short* of the Divine will! or the Bible was penned for *this* man and *that*, and not for that man and this! No one believes this! The economy of the Revealed Word included *revelation* to all, so that "he that runs might read." Up to this age, this end has not been reached, and, until the beginning of the present century scarcely approached.

But the day is now drawing nigh! the light of public and universal education is beginning to illumine the horizon, and send its beams over the earth! Before it the shadows of ignorance fly! The prophetic purpose of Jehovah, when he bade his inspired servants write, and "Proclaim liberty to the captive and light to the blind," is opening upon its grand accomplishment. The harvest shall meet the sower—the reader the writer—the school the book of God!

The earliest beam from the rising light of universal education shone, as was meet it should, from the holy Sabbath, when, half a century ago the idea of the *first* Sabbath School was conceived, and soon followed by its establishment in England. That Sabbath was the beginning of a *new* era! the advent of an event that must have thrilled Heaven with joy; for angels who are ever looking with desire into earthly things, must in this have seen the birth of the power that was to essay to open the book so long sealed to millions. In the Sabbath School, God, who carries out his Divine purposes *towards* men *through* man, began to evolve the effect which his written word fore-contemplated. The children of the destitute, the outlaws of the cities, the morally blind, naked and ignorant, were taught to read the word, written by God with the pens of Prophets and Apostles for *this very end* and *this* alone!

One good movement towards advancing our race has always given rise to others. A heated ball of iron placed in contact with a number of cold ones will impart its heat to each. The warmth of one reforming man's mind warms other minds. Men are affected by contact with him. They seek to do some good also. And so, after the Sabbath School, every day schools—*free* schools for poor children—were thought of, talked about, planned and ultimately carried into execution. But these benevolent enterprises were, at first, like the Sabbath Schools, limited to large cities. They were the acts of individuals and sustained by individual benevolence. By and by, corporations, seeing the beneficial results to the children of the city thus educated, finding that juvenile crime decreased, and that in their houses for detention of youthful criminals, the number of inmates were greatly diminishing, adopted a system of free education under the control of the city. But

this was in no case done until calculation, close calculation in shillings and pence, had been made and submitted to them, showing that the cost of the support of the Public Schools would be annually less than the expense of supporting houses of refuge and of discipline for vicious boys.

But this condition and progress of free education applies to England, where it had birth, and where, to this day it has made but little advance beyond the original system. Instead of being diffused over the kingdom to every hamlet, even of but twenty families, as it should have been and being cared for by the government, it has remained a stationary feature of the cities.

But in the United States—the land of civil, moral and intellectual freedom, the land where the human mind and heart have full scope for active enterprise, and where every noble idea, begotten in the old world, perhaps, but to perish there, is matured till it produces fruit and benefits the race—in the United States the free school found a home and a field for testing its Heavenly origin.

Adopted at Boston, where it flourished like a “green bay tree,” it spread its roots throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, till from the green sward of every village and hamlet in the broad land of the Pilgrims there shot up a sapling of this tree, not of the “knowledge of good and evil,” but of the knowledge of power and impotence.

To the Boston men God seems to have committed the free school mission to the race; and well have they acquitted themselves of the high trust. To-day the free schools of Boston are justly her pride and her glory! To her is given that *ultimate result* whereby mankind may meet the written word face to face, and read therein “as in a glass.”

The free schools of Boston are a leaven, leavening the whole of Christendom! To perfect the system, they have brought to bear upon it all their learning, intelligence, education, wisdom, experience, money, piety! and in none of these are the Massachusetts men paupers. But not satisfied with this, they have despatched able and learned and wise agents to Europe, to gather the best things from the best schools of its enlightened nations, with which, if possible, to improve their own. From Prussia, which boasts the most perfect system of national free education in Europe, and only second to that in New England, they plucked whatever could be grafted into their own flourishing tree: and now their public schools are models for Europe itself! It is but a few weeks since that a movement was set on foot in Lancashire, one of the richest and most populous counties of England, having for its object a petition to Parliament, praying for a charter empowering that county to establish a system of free schools on a basis similar to the free schools in New England.

The States of the Union south of New England have not been inactive and indifferent to so noble a system of Public Education in their own midst. New York, Pennsylvania and other States, with some modification, adopted it, to their honor. Louisiana more recently, so late as 1842, chartered a similar system of public education; and in January of that year a school opened in New Orleans with but 26 scholars. In ten months the number had increased to 470, and in the following December there were 1150 scholars in the school. And since its first establishment down to this time upwards of 6000 pupils in all have participated in the advantages which a liberal and enlightened policy has so freely afforded.

The number of pupils in the school March 30th last was 2600, of which 1448 are boys and 1153 are girls. To give instruction to this large number of scholars 57 teachers are employed at an aggregate compensation of \$36,000.

At this noble school tuition is entirely gratuitous; even the books and stationary used by the pupils being free of charge, thus leaving to parents no excuse, either of necessity or economy, for keeping their children in ignorance.

Prior to the establishment of her system of common schools Louisiana had expended larger appropriations of money to foster the interests of Education than any other State in the Union; but all that remained, after repeated efforts, was the *wreck* of liberal and large enterprises. The hopes and expectations of the citizens, like those of Tennessee in relation to her noble appropriation, were blighted in repeated disappointments, and the most sanguine friends of education began to despair.

It is despair that often inspires men to right modes of action. The necessity of doing something more, and in a different manner, than had yet been done by the intelligent council of the city of New Orleans led them to devise a system that should meet the emergency. Fixing their eyes upon the admirable system of the New England schools, they resolved to adopt it, with such modifications as should adapt it to the circumstances and wants of the community.

Six years experience has tested its perfect fitness, and borne honorable testimony to the wisdom of its originators and adopters. It is a system which now finds an advocate in every child, a protector in every parent and a friend in every citizen. From the people it receives the amplest encouragement and support. Every citizen feels a pride in it and witnesses with emotions of satisfaction its prosperity and usefulness.

Six years ago there existed in Louisiana no collection of books which deserved the name of a Public Library. The Municipal School has now in its possession a library of 8000 volumes, containing the choicest works in the English and

French languages, and translations from the best writers in all languages. The benefits of this valuable institution are not confined exclusively to the pupils of the school, but its use is thrown open to the whole community; parents as well as children participating in its use and equally sharing in its advantages.

This library was established in part by the liberality of the city, but a large portion of its volumes are the contributions of private munificence.

Thus has this school been established and thus has it prospered. An overflowing fountain of wholesome instruction, as an eloquent writer has termed it, it visits with its fertilizing and healthful influences the abodes of profligacy and ignorance, reclaiming from infamy and shame hundreds, yea thousands whose voices must one day control the management of State affairs; who are to take the power and business of the land into their hands, and wield, as citizens, the sceptre of public opinion. Educate the children of a city, and "its citizens shall be wise in council, and honorable men." This is a maxim the age is beginning to learn, and the truth of which the city of New Orleans is destined to prove.

The example and influence of New Orleans were not lost upon other places. The beautiful city of Natchez, the commercial capital of Mississippi, had long suffered for the want of a system of Common Schools. There were, it is true, as there had been in New Orleans, numerous private schools in the city, but these were so expensive in their prices that but a small proportion of the citizens could afford to pay the tuition. The consequence was, that one third, or nearly one half of the children went schoolless, either the whole or a greater part of the year; while many of those who attended school were often compelled to have their education committed to mere mercenaries, who, self-elected and accountable to no one, sought rather their own pecuniary advantage than the moral and intellectual advancement of the pupil.

This state of things painfully forced itself upon the mind of a wealthy and benevolent citizen of the town, who, a northern man by birth and education, knew how properly to appreciate a liberal school system; and, as from day to day in passing through the streets he beheld the large number of unschooled, ignorant and depraved children, he resolved, like a true patriot and christian man, to appropriate a portion of the wealth God had bestowed upon him, towards founding a Public School.

No sooner had he conceived the idea, than he promptly resolved, with a decision and energy characteristic of him, to carry it out into practice. He knew that a good intention, to be good, must be wrought out. Ideas *made visible* are the ideas called for by this age!

Having but recently retired from business, there still remained in his possession an extensive warehouse with a spacious cotton-yard attached to it. This property, situated in the heart of the town, he at once proposed to present to the city, if the municipality would meet the gift with an equivalent amount.

To the lasting honor of the Mayor and Selectmen of that city, the proposition of this gentleman was at once taken into consideration and submitted without delay to the citizens. The result was its unanimous acceptance by the people, with perhaps a few opponents, who were such either through ignorance of the benefit of the system proposed to them, or from motives of self-interest. But these soon became enlisted among its warmest advocates: for ignorance became enlightened; and self-interest found that it would in the end be a receiver and gainer rather than a loser. Countenanced thus by the people, the city council met and passed an ordinance, the title of which reads as follows: "An Ordinance to establish a system of Public Schools for the City of Natchez, to be called 'The Natchez Institute.'" A board of managers was appointed from among the most honorable citizens, who at once proceeded to contract for the enlargement and alteration of the building and improvement of the premises given to the city by—I take the highest pleasure in publishing the name of the enlightened giver to the community—ALVAREZ FISK, Esq. who has upreared for himself in this institution a monument more enduring than the obelisk of a conqueror.

The Boston schools were the model which presented themselves to the minds of the board when they began to select a plan of education in the spirit of Mr. Fisk's intentions, and opening a correspondence with the superintendent of public schools in that city, a gentleman was sent to them every way qualified, not only to superintend the future school when organized, but also skilled to direct the reconstruction and alteration of the edifice for its occupation.

Eleven distinct department school-rooms with the addition of a hall sixty by thirty-three for public exercises, library, philosophical room, &c. were soon completed. These were well ventilated, affording healthful accommodations, and had separate entrances and separate grounds for both sexes; and all this was done at a cost less than six thousand dollars.

The plan of organization adopted arranged the pupils into two Divisions—the male and the female. Each division was divided into three departments, the Primary, the Junior, and the Senior, making, for both sexes, six departments complete. To each of these departments was appointed an appropriate Teacher; and over the whole was placed a Principal to exercise constant and vigilant superintendence. The Superinten-

dent and teachers were selected by the Board with great care. The latter were accountable to the former, to whom they reported, and the former to the Board, who, in their turn, made their final report to the Mayor and City Council—a complete and harmonious system!

A wise code of rules for the government of teachers was adopted and a judicious selection of text books made for the several Departments. In this day of speculative school-book writing and printing, when the cautious and careful teacher has to select from a score of grammars, from a dozen geographies, from half a score of arithmetics, each blazoned forth in the advertisements as superior to the rest, the one he would adopt, such a task as this is no light one. It is at all times a work of great difficulty and delicacy; but it was done with such skill and judgment by the gentlemen to whom it was entrusted, as to afford the highest possible advantage to the pupils in every branch of study.

On the 4th of July, 1845, the Institute being completed and the arrangements made for putting it into immediate operation, it was publicly dedicated to the purposes of general education, the whole city uniting in the imposing ceremonies with an interest hitherto unknown there on any public celebration. On the 14th of the same month, ten days after its dedication, it was opened to receive pupils.

A letter which I have lately received from the Superintendent of the school will advise you of its subsequent progress and triumphant success. It is in reply to one which was written to him by me in February last, after having ascertained that this prosperous and handsome metropolis stood as much in need of a system of Public Schools as Natchez before the adoption of the admirable and successful one, which this day makes her the envy of all other destitute towns.

Having visited that school in August last and witnessed its excellent management and incalculable advantages, I could not help contrasting the opposite condition of the two cities, and wishing that the citizens of this enterprising and growing city could be in the enjoyment of similar privileges. What was morally healthy and beneficial for Natchez I felt must be equally beneficial for Nashville; the climate, manners and customs of the two places being closely assimilated.

I, therefore, addressed a letter to the superintendent of the Natchez Institute, asking him to furnish me with all information at his disposal, touching the origin and progress of the Institute, saying that I believed the intelligent citizens of Nashville, when the subject should be properly presented to their minds, would hasten to adopt a system which in New Orleans and Natchez had been so triumphantly successful.

NATCHEZ, Feb. 26, 1848.

Dear Sir: Yours of the 16th inst. was received yesterday. I am happy to answer any inquiries, or render any aid in my power relative to the important subject of your communication. This school, the "Natchez Institute," (which, by the way, ought to be called "public school") commenced its operation in July, 1845. Although the elements were at work which eventually would have brought about the desired result, yet, the project was very much hastened by a donation of some \$8000 worth of property, by Alvarez Fisk, Esq. The building was completed, and the school put in operation, which is supported by a tax, so much *per centum* on all taxable property within the city limits. The school is free to all white children, residents of Natchez. I have been connected with the school from its commencement, and even spent two months upon the ground, previous to opening, superintending the finishing of the building. We commenced on the 14th July, 1845, with seventy odd pupils, admitting all who were five years old. In the course of the first year, the number increased to nearly five hundred. In the second year, six hundred and thirty odd were admitted, and overwhelmed us so that the Board were obliged to set the standard of age to six years instead of five. This relieved us so that this, the third year of the school, we have since last September, the commencement of our scholastic year, admitted five hundred and seventy pupils. Some eighty of the oldest members of the school have finished their education, or are pursuing a liberal course in college.

Our school is a series, consisting of a primary and junior and senior departments for both sexes. The pupils are all under one roof, but the sexes are kept in distinct apartments. Six rooms are devoted to boys and five to girls. We have seven female and four male teachers, not including myself, whose duty it is, to superintend the whole. The annual expense to sustain this school is about \$7000. Books are not furnished at public expense. In our prescribed course, pupils can obtain a good English, mercantile and classical education. At the end of our second year, we sent twelve young men, well fitted, to college; several are in stores, others are now learning trades. Thirteen of the young ladies who attended our school the first year are now married, and well settled in life.

I mention these statistics to show that our school is not confined to young children and the poorer class of community, but an institution to which the rich and refined can confide the education of their children, and afford the means of education to others who must have remained in ignorance for the want of means of improvement. The policy of the school consists, in the City Council appointing seven men annually, to serve as a Board of Visitors, who examine and employ the

teachers, and visit the school weekly. The Council also appoint several gentlemen of the community to examine the school twice per annum at stated period.

In fact, the school is literally a public one. No teacher can be employed here who is not well qualified by education, neither can one remain when employed, if he fails in *government* and *discipline*. I send herewith a copy of our rules, &c., which is our guide as nearly as the infancy of the Institution will admit. We have not yet had time to carry out the course of the senior department in full.

Our pupils have been remarkably healthy and happy. Death has taken away by sickness but five of our number out of some nine hundred different pupils during the two years and a half of our operations. The best evidence that pupils are happy, is their regular attendance, as their monthly reports show, an abstract of daily attendance being forwarded to every parent once a month. Vocal music is taught in every room, which has proved a *charm* to attract the pupils. I am confident that it has been salutary in doing away the use of the rod very much.

I will forward also such reports as I have on hand, and should you find any thing worthy of imitation, or in any way useful to the promotion of the truly patriotic cause of *public* and *free* education, it will very much rejoice the heart of the subscriber, with the assurance that any thing in my power, to aid you or the citizens of Nashville in this glorious enterprise, shall be cheerfully contributed.

Very respectfully yours,

J. PEARL,

Superintendant Natchez Institute.

To J. H. INGRAHAM, Esq.

This letter speaks for itself! It needs no comment. Briefly but distinctly it shows to the world the present condition and high prosperity of the Natchez Public School. To the faithfulness of the statements I can bear personal testimony, having, as has just been said to you, visited the Institute and witnessed its successful operation.

On the first of May, last year, I was also present when the pupils celebrated the day by a procession, which marched with banners and music from the Hall of the Institute to a pleasant grove in the vicinity of the city, where a collation awaited them. At one view upwards of seven hundred children, of both sexes, were to be seen playing in the woodlands with the merriest hilarity. The girls were arrayed in white and wreathed with garlands, and the boys vied with their fair school-fellows in the neatness and taste of their own apparel. It was a beautiful spectacle—to see the congre-

gated children of a city, rich and poor, the mechanic's and the merchant's little daughter, the rich widow's son and the poor widow's son, alike healthy, alike happy! It was a scene that could be witnessed no where but in a Republic! which no land but ours could produce, because in this land exists the only true republic of the earth. A school, such as this, is the practical exponent of what is meant by that immortal axiom laid down in the opening of the Declaration of Independence: "All men are born free and equal!" Such a scene, and the school out of which it grew, I have said, could only be witnessed in a republic! It is in keeping with the spirit and genius of our institutions; and none but a monarchist would raise objections to a system that enfolds within it those conservative elements which must preserve this republic in its integrity.

Upon the innocent recreations of this school-holiday thousands of admiring spectators were looking with pleasure. Pride and satisfaction could be seen written in the looks of their parents, in those of the numerous citizens, and in those of the Mayor and City Council, as they gazed upon them; and not less proud and happy were the faithful teachers, who were here and there beheld mingled with their pupils, honored and beloved. One and all seemed to feel a noble pride in the consciousness that their fair city could present a scene so honorable to itself, to the state, to the Union, to humanity.

This school, now so prosperous and creditable to its benefactors, opened, as the Superintendent's letter states, with but 70 pupils. These were chiefly sent by parents who from want of means had hitherto denied their children the blessing of education. There were, however, a few exceptions in the children of the intelligent friends of the Institute, who, confident in the superiority of this school system over all other, and in order to set an example, were among the first to enter their children and give them the benefit of all its privileges.

But the Board of Trustees neither invited nor solicited scholars. They knew that the system would commend itself to the wise and intelligent parents of the community so soon as it should be fully understood. At the end of the first year the school numbered 500 children, and these, not from among the uncarpeted abodes of the poor alone, but from the luxurious homes of the rich. The perfection of the system; the admirable manner in which the school was conducted; the improvement of the pupils in mind and morals, removed all prejudice which had existed against public schools, and the Institute became, as it is this day, the pet and pride of all.

One excellent feature of the school, was its Friday evening recreations. Every alternate Friday the spacious Institute Hall was thrown open to the citizens, who crowded thither to listen to the reading of compositions in prose and verse by the

pupils, to singing, to the recitation of dialogues, and various exercises in elocution; and on every other Friday evening, not thus occupied, some one or more of the young gentlemen of the city, invited by the Board, pronounced an original essay or poem. The Hall of the Institute thus took the place of show-places and concert-rooms, and were quite as attractive to the citizens. In a word, the "Friday evenings" became *fashionable*! The *last* "evening" at the Hall, or the *next* "evening" at the Hall, formed subjects of interesting conversation in every family, as well that of the laborer and the mechanic, as those of the rich merchant or professional man. The school, in a word, has become a bond of union among the the citizens, uniting them together in one common interest and mutual sympathy, for scarcely is there a family in the city that has not a youthful member from its hearth-stone one of its pupils.

This admirable feature of selecting the young men of the town to deliver lectures on such subjects as might be congenial to them, had the effect of calling into exercise talents and abilities which, otherwise, might never have been developed or known to be possessed. The young lawyer, or the student-at-law, the young physician or the student of medicine, the young merchant or his clerk, the young mechanic or the intelligent journeyman, one and all had the opportunity afforded them of displaying their forensic talents before their assembled fellow-citizens in the most agreeable manner.

Thus to all classes and conditions this noble school has become the rallying point of interest and affection.

Besides the mere education of the mind, the morals of the children in this school are the peculiar care of the teachers and the Superintendent. Their eyes are upon them out of school as well as in school, on the Sabbath as well as during the week, and any misconduct, or vice, or profanity, or irreverent spending of the Sabbath, or noise or disorder in church, or absence from it, rudeness in the streets going to or from school are noted, and the delinquent made answerable for it in his Department the ensuing day.

In this way the juvenile population has been reformed and elevated in morals, and society is already reaping the rewards of its liberality in founding an institution which, in its infancy, has proved so rich in blessings.

But there are other advantages accruing to that city than these—advantages which will have weight with the capitalist and real-estate holder. Previous to the establishment of the Institute the city of Natchez had been one-half laid in ruins by a tornado; and, what with pecuniary reverses and devastating fires, it seemed destined to rise no more from its prostrate condition. One-third of its houses were ruinous and

untenanted, and hope of a more favorable condition of things seemed vain. It was under such a state of things that Mr. Fisk conceived the idea of establishing the school which has immortalised his name.

Now let us examine the result of this benevolent enterprize. "One of the features of the school," says Article 2d of its Constitution, "is that only the free white children whose parents are *inhabitants* of Natchez, shall be admitted as pupils of the Institute." This limitation to children within the corporate limits necessarily shut out many in the vicinity of the town who desired to avail themselves of the school. Families therefore began to move into town from the country around, from adjacent counties, and even from a great distance, for the purpose of conferring upon their children the advantages of a system of education which combined the two great *desiderata*, cheapness and thorough instruction. Planters with large families preferred renting houses in the city and leaving their estates with their overseers, or occasionally visiting them themselves, than to retain private tutors. Real estate went up 30 *per cent.* and increased in value. Ruined houses were repaired or rebuilt, and new ones erected, to meet the growing demand for tenements. The influx of population gave new life and vigor to the hitherto stagnant current of business. A physician of the highest respectability with six children moved thirty-eight miles to town to educate his family; and when I saw him in August last he informed me that he educated his five eldest children at an expense of only thirty-five dollars a year, exclusive of school-books, which in Natchez are furnished by the pupils at their own expense. Previous to this the cost of their education had been several hundred dollars; and he added further, that his sons and daughters were improving more rapidly and advancing in more solid attainments at the Institute than ever before.

Thus from almost complete prostration, Natchez has been raised to prosperity and vigor by the adoption of a Public School System. Its population has increased, its business extended, its streets have been built up, its rents have advanced, and real estate increased in value almost one third, while energy, vitality and cheerfulness have taken the place of inaction, stagnation and gloom. The rise in the value of real estate alone is more than sufficient to cover the current expenses of the school, had it twice the number of its 600 pupils.

Such then being the result of the establishment of the Public School system in Natchez, may not the citizens of Nashville look for similar fruits if the system be adopted in their city? Save in the prostration of business, the condition of the two cities, with regard to climate, manners and customs, institutions and society, is very much alike. What works advantageously

in one, promises equal advantages to the other; and higher, indeed, because here is the advantage, in the outset, of a degree of prosperity to which the city of Natchez, at the starting of the Institute, was wholly a stranger.

But some one of you may reply, that *you*, as a city, have heavy taxes to pay, have come under bonds that you must meet, and are, therefore, less able than Natchez to take into consideration any scheme which aims to an increase of these taxes. Another may answer, "we have very good schools and enough of them, and nearly all the children are going to them and are doing well." To such I will now, speak!

Let it first be clearly understood, that the system of schools proposed to your consideration is *no experiment*. It is a copy of a system in Natchez and New Orleans in successful operation this very day, and every day becomes dearer and dearer to the citizens of those cities. What is proposed to you, is the adoption of a system which renders Boston the pride of American cities, and has made New England the land, above all other lands, of superior intelligence, wealth and power. It is *no* experiment—no merely speculative enterprize, but a *fact* incontrovertible which is offered to you. It is no question of success or failure! The system has been tried, thoroughly, ably tried, and stamped with truth and perpetuity. The tree is known by its fruit; and thistles never yet yielded grapes!

I repeat—what has been a blessing to Natchez will equally prove a blessing to Nashville. There exists here a condition of things similar in many respects to that which characterised the former city before the idea of the Public School was started. I do not refer to mercantile prostration, (for all is smiling prosperity here,) but to the deficiency of school education. I will prove this:

Last September, a few days after I came to reside among you, my attention was drawn to the subject of Common Schools by finding in the Sabbath School temporarily placed under my superintendence several children, ten, eleven and twelve years of age who could not read. Upon inquiring of a citizen if there were no system of Public School established in this city, I received the following intelligent answer.

"The State has a fund of nearly \$2,000,000, devoted nominally to the furtherance of the cause of education by the establishment of a Free School System. The interest of this appropriation, \$118,000, is apportioned throughout the State among 1400, or thereabouts, nominal school districts. Nashville constitutes a district in itself and receives as its portion of the fund less than \$600 per annum. With this sum an intelligent and highly respectable gentleman is hired to keep a "Free School." Sometimes he has twenty scholars, sometimes he has seventy; and it is a wonder that he should have any, ca-

pable as he is as a teacher; for by some means the school has unkindly got the name of "The Poor School," and the poor dont like to be labelled too *plainly*, and they have a *little* pride, and so had rather their children should run idle and ignorant about the streets than be branded "poor" by attending the Poor School! In a word," added my informant, "the City Free School here is a failure; all the rest of the 1400 free schools are by-words of reproach, and the magnificent appropriation made to the State is worse than none at all. The result is, people that can pay for private tuition send to the private schools, and those who cannot, get along as they can, move away to other cities which are better provided with schools, or suffer their children to grow up in ignorance and vice."

Here was presented a field for the noble Free School system to take possession of, till under its genial beams the whole waste should bloom and blossom like the rose; and I resolved that, so far as I could contribute to the happy result, Nashville also should enjoy the privilege shared by her sister cities, New Orleans and Natchez.

My first step was to address a letter to the Superintendent of the Institute at Natchez, asking for all the information which he could furnish me relating to the origin, establishment, progress and present condition of that school. His letter in reply I have read to you.

Upon receiving it, I proceeded to take the preliminary steps towards bringing about the object in view. The first step was to ascertain the number of schools at present existing in this city, the next to obtain the average number of pupils attending these schools, and then calculate the amount of tuition paid by each pupil *per annum*, and to arrive at the aggregate sum paid out for schooling by the citizens at large.

Having accomplished this labour with as much accuracy as could be reached, or was necessary, the next thing was to ascertain the number of children in the city old enough to go to school. Of these I found 2015 above the age of 5 and under 21.

From this number I deducted all those between 5 and 6 years of age and all those over 20, which left 1500 schoolable children in this city above 6 years old and under 20.

The number of schools in the city, not including the existing Free School already spoken of, I had ascertained to be thirty-six, of every kind and degree, male and female. The number of pupils attending these 36 schools, 1005; from which, after deducting 115 that come from out of town, there remain 890 *Nashville* children that attend these 36 schools. Subtracting this number from the whole 1500 old enough to attend school and there remain 610 children of the city that do not go to school and have no means of school education. If to this

number those between 5 and 6 years be re-added, and also those between 20 and 21, (which are the extreme limits recognised in the Public School system of New England,) the number of unschooled children would swell to 1010.

But 610 is quite large enough for the sum of uneducated children in an enlightened city like this, without this addition!

A few weeks ago search was instituted in the city of Boston, which numbers about 200,000 inhabitants, and but 36 children above 5 years of age could be found not going to any school! And yet in this city, with less than twenty thousand inhabitants, 610 are found destitute of the means of education. It is to be hoped that this stigma will not be permitted to remain much longer upon the fair escutcheon of the capital of the West!

But I have not yet done with figures. Arithmetic is a dry subject, but it is sometimes very useful.

The 1005 children of both sexes that attend school pay annually, or their parents and guardians do for them, to these 36 schools, the gross aggregate of \$33,584 00. This is a large sum to pay for tuition in a city of this size. Divided by 1005, the whole number of scholars, those from out of town included, it gives \$33,42 for the cost of the education of each scholar, large and small, old and young. Now if the whole 1500 *were* to be educated in the same expensive manner, the amount paid for tuition would be \$50,025,00 *per annum*. If we were to add 200, for those between five and six years of age, who *ought* to be included in any list of schoolable children, but whom we have, as I have said, omitted in our estimates, we shall reach the large sum of \$56,509,00, expended yearly for schooling of the children of this city.

Now, from a report before me, giving the annual expenditures under the New Orleans Public School system, I find that the cost of educating the 2600 pupils in that school to be but \$36,500. Yet there is actually paid in this city, under the present state of things, the large sum of \$29,593 per annum, for the education of the 890 Nashville children, or \$33,584 for the schooling of the whole number that go to school.

At this rate, the 2600 children that New Orleans now educates for \$36,500, would cost her \$87,778. Therefore, her adoption of the Free Public School System saves her the difference between \$36,500 and \$87,778, which difference is \$51,278 saved her by her school system every year. This is the economy of voluntary taxation!

The letter of the Superintendent of the Natchez Institute reports its current expenses for the last year as \$7000 for 570 pupils. At the rate of the present cost of educating 890 in this city, her 570 pupils would cost her \$21,508. Her Public School System therefore saves her \$14,503, which is the difference between \$7000, and \$21,508,00.

These data will guide us with accuracy in calculating the estimate of the costs to this city of the system of Public Schools now offered for your consideration and adoption.

The annual expense of educating each scholar in the New Orleans schools is found, on dividing the number of pupils into the round aggregate cost, to be \$14,03 each, making a balance on each scholar's tuition in favor of New Orleans of \$19,22, when compared with the Nashville estimates.

The annual cost of each scholar in the Natchez school is found to be \$12,30—showing a balance in favor of that city compared with the estimates of the cost of education in Nashville, of \$20,95. That is, every boy and girl going to school here, pays for its schooling in a year \$20 95 more than a Natchez boy and girl, and \$19 22 cents more than a boy or girl pays in the city of New Orleans.

Now the calculation of the cost of each pupil in this city under the proposed system, closely made from the data and facts before us, will give us the following results: Without increasing the actual existing expenses of tuition it is well understood that four pupils might be added to each of the twelve departments of the Natchez Institute. This would give us then in even numbers 620 scholars educated there at an expense of \$7000. Now, taking this 620 as our first term, we say that if 620 children cost the city \$7000 : : 1500 will cost \$16,935,30, which will be the cost *per annum* of educating the one thousand five hundred children of this city. Subtract this from \$33,584, which the citizens now pay for tuition, and the difference in favor of the Public School system will be \$18,648,70; subtract it from \$50,025,00, the sum *per annum* which the education of the whole 1500 children would cost in the existing state of things, and we shall have in favor of the Public School the aggregate \$33,080,70.

By dividing the 1500 pupils into \$16,935,00, the estimated cost to the city of the proposed school, we shall have \$11 30, as the cost to the city of each pupil; showing a difference in favor of the Public School system of \$21,95 for each pupil.

To recapitulate: The saving of expense to the citizens of this city by the adoption of the Common School system will be \$21,95 on each scholar, \$18,648,70 on the eight hundred and ninety that go to school, and \$33,089,70 on the whole number of children.

If the whole sum, \$16,935, were apportioned among the 2000 voters of the city, it will give \$8,46 to be paid by each man for the education of his children a year, has he one or a dozen.

In the foregoing calculations, we have, as you will perceive, made the estimates for the whole 1500 children that are old enough to go to school, including those who now attend the many excellent private schools in the city with the 610 who

are now destitute; although, in the establishment of the proposed Public School, we seek *primarily* the advantage of the neglected 610! The object of the contemplated school is not to interfere with the other schools, but to build up one for those who have not the means of paying the high tuition fees at private schools, or pay them with great difficulty; and in this category are not found merely the labourer and mechanic, but the professional man and the merchant. If the school prove useful and commend itself to the citizens, all will be at liberty to share in its privileges. Parents will choose between it and other schools, as they now make selections between one school and another.

Good and efficient teachers need not, and will not fear its establishment. All teachers, who are *truly* such, will hail with pleasure any healthy system of Free Education that aims at the greatest good of the greatest number, which will be ultimately the greatest good of all!

All teachers, now engaged in their profession in this city, at the time the proposed school shall go into operation, which we hope to see under complete organization one year from the 1st of September next, will have a preference over all others from abroad, should they prove competent and consent to accept a position. The Superintendent, however, must be a man trained under the system and fully competent not only to direct the construction of the building, but to superintend the school. New England or Philadelphia would, without difficulty, furnish such a person. And, if I may be allowed to speak of myself, I beg leave to state that, in moving in the effort to establish the Public School System in this city, I am not seeking my own! Ere the school shall go into operation I shall have relinquished teaching altogether; and were I honoured by the Board of Trustees with the proffer of a situation in it, I should decline accepting it on any terms. *This I wish to be distinctly understood.* My only wish is to see you enjoying the blessings of a system which I have seen producing such good fruits in other cities of the Republic.

As to the Government of the proposed Public School, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen are to be *ex-officio* the Managers or Trustees, in accordance with the statute-book, Chapter 168, Year 1847-8, Section 6th, wherein authority is conferred upon the city to provide for "the establishment of a system of Free Schools, and to regulate the same so as to avoid sectarian influences."

Your honorable Mayor has been pleased, from the first, to listen with favorable attention to the proposed system, and by his countenance and counsel has materially aided me in my efforts to bring the subject before you. Many other gentlemen of influence and high character, eminent for wisdom and pru-

dence, have become its advocates and desire its adoption. Indeed, all among you, of whatever calling, to whom the subject has been presented, feel that universal education is the only safeguard of a Republic.

Fellow-citizens, I have now submitted the subject to your consideration. The question resolves itself into a very simple one! Are you willing to save the difference between \$16,935, and \$33,584—nay, between \$16,925, and \$50,025, which you would have to pay, if all your children were schooled? Are you willing to pay but \$16,935 to have every child educated, or would you rather continue to pay \$33,584 for the education of but little more one half of them?

At least if you will consent to *no more*, will you consent to be taxed \$7000 to educate the 610 which run exposed to vice and ignorance about your streets?

Remember, that you are to decide not only for the children of to-day, but for the future! for the 800 children between the ages of two and six now coming forward upon the stage and for generations in all time to come! Sixteen thousand and nine hundred dollars added to the general tax will educate all that are now demanding the adoption of the system. Adopt it, fellow-citizens, and you will soon behold a change brought about in the juvenile portion of the community that will rejoice every parent's heart. Your streets and squares, your alleys and market-place will then no longer resound as they now do, on the Sabbath as well as week days, with oaths and brawls.

But I hear you ask, Where is our liberal and enlightened Fisk? Where is the wealthy man who will come forward and say, "Fellow-citizens, *I will give*, if *you* will meet the gift!" "Show us the man," you reiterate, "and we will answer for it that we will meet him half way!"

I wish I *could* show you the man, fellow-citizens! and I have no doubt *the man* is in your community who will follow the noble example of Mr. Fisk; and while he endows the Public Institute with his money, will loan his money out at good interest; for he who gives to such a cause as this, will be paid by the gratitude of every age after him. To be greatly envied is the man to whom is given the *privilege* of giving to so noble a work. He will open a river of knowledge that shall flow on through all time, enriching the soil of the human mind. He will leave an honored name upon earth, and in heaven will not lose his reward!

I repeat, I wish I *could* show you the MAN! He, perhaps, only waits, first to see if you act as if you were in right down earnest to have the school. I have no doubt that there is more than one gentleman in Nashville who would gladly give ten or twelve thousand dollars to erect the buildings, if you will consent to meet it with an equivalent voluntary taxation. You

vince at the tax, small as it will prove to be! But small as it is, it will swallow up your enormous school-bills. Taxes *vs.* school-bills! This is the point to which we bring you. Your light tax paid, you will have a surplus on hand for other expenses.

But if no wealthy gentleman, liberal enough to start the school by a donation, comes forward to found it, we need not despair. The amount for the buildings, which will not cost over twelve thousand dollars, can be easily raised by eight or ten liberal minded men clubbing together—a method which has been proposed. But it is better to have the donation made by *one* gentleman; nearly every enterprize of this kind having been thus originated and endowed. It gives impetus and energy to the community, to see wealth thus dedicated in a *MASS*; and there is something noble in the act, as well as healthy in the example to rich men in other places.

A monument, such as this Public School, would be, to its endower, more enduring than a pyramid! Generation after generation would rise up and call his memory blessed!—His name would be engraven in the hearts of posterity, and countless children yet unborn would celebrate his birth-day! A monument such as this, built in the living hearts of the future, is *immortality*! Marble crumbles into dust before its enduring splendor! He who founds a school, gives his thousands to God; for he thereby opens the pages of the Bible to thousands to whom it was before a sealed book!

The plea, that the debt of the city is too large for you to consent to increase it by voluntary taxation, is of no tangible weight. You are, perhaps, aware that your indefatigable assessors have discovered within the corporation real and personal property hitherto untaxed, to a considerable amount, which, though not yet exactly ascertained, promises to be large, and may remove from your minds the plea just alluded to.

The real estate, also, hitherto assessed and taxed, has increased \$500,000 in value since 1846! This is prosperity—the highest degree of prosperity! God has blessed you as a city with his richest bounty. Talk not of debt, then, with such a happy condition of your municipal affairs. Fifteen or twenty thousand dollars upon a city so signally prosperous, for the purpose of establishing a Public School free to all, would not be felt. On what higher, on what nobler enterprize can money be bestowed than on the education of the children of the Republic, who are one day to control its destinies! who will be invested with the power to sustain or subvert, save or destroy its cherished institutions?

It is the duty of every sound government, municipal as well as State, not only to provide for the punishment, but also for the prevention of crime. If we examine into the

history of the lives of those confined in your jail and penitentiary, you will find that by far the largest proportion have grown up from boyhood in lamentable ignorance and neglect; that few of them know how to read and write, and scarcely any have received a moral and religious education in early life. The records of all prisons show this peculiar radical deficiency to have existed in the history of those who crowd them.

Political economy, of late, teaches statesmen that it is cheaper to prevent than to punish crime. If the money expended on the trial and conviction of a prisoner, on paying the jury, witnesses and lawyers, could have been, by some happy means, appropriated to his early education, how different would have been his destiny! Instead of directing his untutored sagacity to obtain a dishonest livelihood, and then in devising shrewd means of escaping detection and eluding the officers of the law, his energies and faculties, properly trained, would have contributed to the comfort and happiness of society, which now casts him from her bosom an outlaw, deprived of social sympathy and doomed to a degrading confinement or an appalling death by the hangman's rope.

Better, far better, that society should pay for his early *education*, than afterwards be compelled to contribute to his *punishment*. A case may not occupy ten minutes, and yet the fine, costs and expenses would educate two children a year in the proposed Public School. The expenses incurred in punishing the smallest theft will exceed the cost of educating a scholar for one year. The Police expenses of the city of New York are alone half a million *per annum*! a sum that will educate, on the plan of the Public School System, 21,000 children for a year!

People complain of a light tax for sustaining schools, but are blind to the cost of legislating against criminals, of the cost of judges, of prosecuting officers, of jurors and of witnesses; the cost of building houses of correction and jails and penitentiaries for restraining and punishing them.

"One ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," is an old and philosophical maxim.

The bane and the antidote are now presented before you! the school or the penitentiary, the school-master or the prison-keeper! The whole subject is contained in this direct interrogative: Shall we erect school houses or penitentiaries?

Public schools and teachers are the great enemies of states' prisons and executioners. The hangman cannot live where the school-master thrives.

At the foundation of the cross and the printing press lies the Public School—universal Education! This, second to Christianity, is the element that shall revolutionize the world! It is the forerunner that shall prepare the way for universal liberty on earth, and harbinger the dawn of that day when violence

shall no more be heard in the land, and when knowledge "shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea."

My task ends in committing the subject in to your hands! I can assure you, that you will have the cheerful and energetic co-operation of your public-spirited Mayor and Common Council, besides the countenance of many influential citizens of all occupations, for all are alike interested in the establishment of a school system which presents to you a plan of Education not for the rich alone, nor for the poor alone, but for one and all.

It is proposed to entitle the proposed school

"THE NASHVILLE MUNICIPAL INSTITUTE."

It will be directed, like that at Natchez, by the Mayor and Aldermen, assisted by seven gentlemen, appointed by them without reference to political or denominational distinctions, for the purpose of acting as a visiting committee.

In considering this important subject, my fellow-citizens, do not forget the maxim which should be recorded in letters of gold over the gates of every town and city in this Republic:

"The Property of the people must secure the Education of the people."

I now bring my report to a close, with a brief extract from an address delivered, before the Natchez Institute, by Dr. Merrill, President of the Board of Visitors: "The Board would point to the many evidences of increasing prosperity exhibited in our city, consequent upon the establishment of the Institute,—to the number of families crowding into the city limits, to enjoy its benefits,—to the increased demand for dwellings, and the advance in the price for rents,—to the enhancement in the value of family residences, and other property,—to the improved appearance and deportment of our youth,—and, though last, not least, to the relief from care and anxiety on account of the education of their children, afforded our citizens; leaving the merchant, mechanic and laborer, free to exercise his talents and industry for the support of his family, and in the consciousness that posterity will not have cause to censure him, for bringing up his children in ignorance, vice, and want. These evidences of prosperity and improvement will afford sufficient encouragement, we trust, to a steady and zealous perseverance in an undertaking, which possesses the rare quality, like Christian charity, of blessing both the giver and the receiver."

Fellow-citizens, I now take leave of this subject, committing it in the most solemn manner, and before God, into your hands! It remains with yourselves whether you will receive the system or reject it! There are yet three months to the municipal elections! This interval you will have to discuss the plan proposed, and inform your minds fully upon it.

Of those who object to public schools on the ground that children of all classes are thrown too much together, I would inquire if they are not quite as much thrown together in our present schools? Who in this republican country, shall take the risk upon himself of *weeding* our private schools? All are admitted to them who can pay, and all who pay are not necessarily suitable companions for your children on *that ground* alone.

At the Natchez Institute I saw three or four hundred boys at play during recess. All were neat and clean. There were no signs of poverty or vice: and the Superintendent remarked to me, that those whom I saw dressed with the most care belonged to the humbler classes, who, having no school-bills to pay, took a commendable pride in dressing their children neatly. Besides, in all schools, both boys and girls will instinctively select their own play-mates; each grouping with those kindred in feeling and taste. Certainly the objection stated should be the last which should be urged by a patriotic American!

Now, in conclusion, let me ask you, my fellow-citizens, to what spectacle can you point more imposing than to that of a city advancing in wealth and greatness, intelligence and power by its efforts to diffuse among all its youthful inhabitants the inestimable blessings of FREE Education. Such a city will be prosperous in its councils, honored in its citizens, smiled upon by Heaven, and shine "a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty among the cities of the earth."

END.

APPENDIX.

In order that the citizens of Nashville may form a clear idea what the character and government of the proposed School will be, the Rules for the government of the Natchez Institute are herewith appended.

ARTICLE I.—INSTITUTE.

1. The Institute shall be in two *DIVISIONS*, *male* and *female*: and each division shall have three *Departments*, *PRIMARY*, *JUNIOR* and *SENIOR*.

2. In the *Primary Department* shall be taught reading, spelling, mental arithmetic, primary geography, writing on slates, enunciation and vocal music.

3. In the *Junior Department* shall be taught reading, spelling, geography, grammar, mental and written arithmetic, history, penmanship, enunciation and vocal music.

4. In the *Senior Department* shall be taught the higher English branches, modern languages, Latin, Greek, declamation, composition and vocal music.

ARTICLE II.—PUPILS.

1. All free white children whose parents or guardians are inhabitants of Natchez, and who shall have attained the age of five years, shall be admitted as pupils of the Institute, upon being furnished, at the expense of the parent or guardian, with the necessary books, and also on the payment of two dollars, which shall entitle the pupil to the use of the necessary furniture, while he or she may remain in the Institute.

2. Application for admission into the Institute shall be made at a regular meeting of the Board, and those entitled shall receive a certificate from the President; on presentation of which to the Principal, he shall assign the applicant to the proper department.

3. Propriety of deportment is required of the scholars at all times.

4. Pupils are required to be punctual in their attendance, and to appear with their faces, hands and clothes clean; and for every delay of five minutes, they will receive a mark for tardiness.

5. Any pupil who may be absent on two successive days, or three days in one week, or six days in one month, or repeatedly tardy, without a written excuse from the parent or guardian, satisfactory to the teacher, shall be suspended from the Institute, and readmitted only by permission of the Board of Visitors.

6. Pupils in the *Junior* and *Senior* departments will not be allowed to hold communication with each other during school hours, either by talking, whispering, writing, or by gestures, without permission of the teacher.

7. Any pupil guilty of violating the rules, disobedience to a teacher, or of other gross misconduct, may be suspended from the Institute by the teacher, with the advice and consent of the Principal; a written notice of which, stating the cause, shall be immediately given to the parent or guardian; and such pupil shall not be restored without the consent of the Board of Visitors.

8. No pupil shall be allowed to leave school before the appointed hour without the consent of the teacher.

9. Pupils leaving the Institute to avoid a public examination, or within four weeks previous to the close of a regular term, shall not be allowed to return except by permission from the Board.

10. Vulgar and profane language, the use of tobacco in any form, and the use of pocket knives, on the premises, are forbidden.

11. Any damage done to the building, or other property of the Institute, must be paid for within one week, or the pupil committing it, will be suspended.

12. No pupil will be admitted to the Institute, who is afflicted with any contagious disease, or who has not been vaccinated.

ARTICLE III.—PRINCIPAL.

1. The Principal shall at all times be subject to the direction of the Board of Visitors, and shall devote himself exclusively to the duties of his station.

2. He shall keep a register of the Institute, for the use of the Board, in which shall be recorded the names, residence, age, birth-place, date of admission, suspension, dismissal or withdrawal, and the cause thereof, of each pupil; also the name of the parent or guardian.

3. It shall be his duty to visit the respective departments daily, and to render the teachers such aid as he may judge proper. He shall also watch thoroughly, and investigate closely, the official conduct of the teachers, and make a true report, from time to time, to the Board of Visitors, without restraint or prejudice.

4. He shall superintend the classification of pupils, and have precedence of the teachers, in the regulation and discipline of the several departments.

5. He shall make a detailed statement of the condition of the Institute, at the close of each term, and suggest such improvements as he may deem advisable.

6. The Principal shall have power to convene a special meeting of the teachers whenever, in his opinion, the interests of the Institute require it.

ARTICLE IV.—TEACHERS.

1. They shall hold their offices during the pleasure of the Board of Visitors, and shall not resign without giving at least two weeks written notice to the President of the Board, to whom all communications from the teachers shall be addressed.

2. They shall attend at their respective rooms, at least fifteen minutes before the time appointed for the opening the school, to see that proper order be observed in assembling; and shall require the pupils to go directly home when dismissed.

3. The teachers shall keep a register of their schools, in which shall be recorded the names, age, residence, date of admission, dismissal or withdrawal, and the cause thereof, and name of parent or guardian of each pupil.

4. They shall keep a daily roll, of the attendance and merit of each pupil, according to prescribed forms, from which they shall prepare an abstract, every month, for the parent or guardian and for the Board.

5. They shall make their pupils acquainted with the rules and orders of the Institute, and practise a firm, impartial, prudent and vigilant discipline; shall supervise the conduct of pupils during recess as well as in session, and inculcate upon them, at all times, the principles of morality and virtue.

6. Each teacher shall report weekly to the Board the cases of punishment and the causes.

7. No medals or prizes shall be awarded to the pupils.

8. The teachers shall give undivided attention to the duties of, and in no case be absent from their respective departments during school hours.

9. The course of study and mode of instruction prescribed, shall not be changed, except by order of the Board.

10. No teacher shall permit any subscription paper to be circulated, or any contribution to be taken, in the school room; and no public notice shall be given, without permission from the Principal or Visiting Committee.

11. A semi-monthly meeting of the teachers shall be held in the Institute, at such time as the Board of Visitors may appoint for the discussion of subjects connected with their duties; which shall be attended by all the teachers, and open for the reception of the members of the Board.

ARTICLE V.—DAILY SESSIONS.

1. The Institute shall open at 9 o'clock, A. M. from the first Monday in September, and close at 2 o'clock, P. M. until the last day of April—the residue of the term open at 8 o'clock, A. M. and close at 1 o'clock, P. M.

2. At the precise time appointed for opening in the morning, the teacher in charge of each room shall read a portion of scripture without comment, and the form of prayer described by the Board of Visitors. The school shall be closed in the respective departments, by singing.

3. On Friday afternoon of each week there shall be a public review of one or more classes; and in the evening a public rhetorical exercise.

ARTICLE VI.—TERMS.

1. The academic year shall be divided into two terms: the first to commence on the first Monday in September, and close on the Friday preceding the first Monday in February; the second to commence on the first Monday of February and close on the 4th of July.

2. A public examination shall be held on the last week of the first term, and the two last weeks of the second term.

ARTICLE VII.—VACATIONS.

There shall be vacation of one week at Christmas; the 22d day of February; the 1st day of May; and from the 4th July to the first Monday of September.

The 4th of July shall be celebrated as the anniversary of the Institute.

The course of study pursued in the several Departments of the Natchez Institute are also here added, inasmuch as it will furnish some idea of the course that will be adopted in the Nashville Institute.

PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

Eclectic Primer; Eclectic Spelling Book; Eclectic First Reader; Eclectic Second Reader; Oral Geography; Davies' First Lesson in Arithmetic; Mental Arithmetic; Mason's Songs for Little Singers; Russell's First Book on Enunciation; Bible.

JUNIOR DEPARTMENT.

Eclectic Third Reader; Eclectic Fourth Reader; Eclectic Fifth Reader; Worcester's Elementary Dictionary; Morse's School Geography; Kirkham's Grammar; Hazen's Grammar; Davies' Arithmetic; Davies' Algebra; Davies' Elementary Geometry; Mental Arithmetic; Goodrich's History United States; Grimshaw's History Greece; Grimshaw's History Rome; Grimshaw's History England; Grimshaw's History France; Davies' Practical Geometry; Root's Penmanship; Mason's Juvenile Harp; Russell's Second Book of Enunciation; Bible.

SENIOR DEPARTMENT.—FIRST YEAR.

First Term.—Latin Grammar; Anthon's Latin Lessons—1st part, Anthon's Prose Composition; Anthon's Cæsar; Anthon's Sallust; Perkins' Aid to Composition; Mental Arithmetic; Vocal Music; Penmanship; Book-keeping.

Second Term.—Anthon's Virgil; Bronson's Elocution; Ruschenberger's Anatomy and Physiology; Ruschenberger's Mammalogy; Anthon's Greek

Grammar; Anthon's First Greek Lessons; Anthon's Prosody and Metre; Mental Arithmetic; Vocal Music; Davies' Bourdon.

SECOND YEAR.

First Term.—Anthon's Horace; Anthon's Versification; Anthon's Cicero; Anthon's Zumpt's Latin Grammar; Anthon's Jacob's Greek Reader; Davies' Bourdon; Ruschenberger's Ornithology; Ruschenberger's Herpetology and Ichthyology; Comstock's Natural Philosophy; Vocal Music; Penmanship; Leverett's Latin Lexicon.

Second Term.—Anthon's Anabasis of Zenophon; Davies' Bourdon; Davies' Legendre; Davies' Surveying; Comstock's Chemistry; Ruschenberger's Botany; Ruschenberger's Geology; Guy's Astronomy and Keith on Globes; Anthon's Zumpt's Latin Grammar; Anthon's New Greek Grammar; Vocal Music; Anthon's Greek and English Lexicon.

THIRD YEAR.

First Term.—Livy; Tacitus; Davies' Bourdon's Algebra; Davies' Legendre's Geometry; Davies' Analytical Geometry; Græca Majora; Anthon's Homer; Vocal Music; French Language.

Second Term.—Græca Majora; Anthon's Horace; Abercrombie's Intellectual Philosophy; Wayland's Moral Philosophy; Paley's Natural Theology, with Paxton's Illustrations; The Constitution of the United States; Jameson's Rhetoric; Davies' Analytical Geometry; Davies' Descriptive Geometry; Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities; Vocal Music; French Language; Declamation and Composition; Bible.

The following Report, published in the early stage of the Natchez Public School, will be more appropriate to be laid before citizens who are just on the eve of adopting a similar system, than reports of a later date, made when the school had become more prosperous; for just now we are most interested in seeing the working of the beginning of the system, than in contemplating its triumph. The report will encourage us, and show what is expected of us.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF VISITORS OF THE NATCHEZ INSTITUTE.

To the President and Selectmen of the City of Natchez:

GENTLEMEN:—In pursuance of the provisions of the ordinance entitled "an ordinance to establish a system of Public Schools in the city of Natchez, to be called the Natchez Institute," the Board of Visitors appointed to manage said Institute, REPORT: That soon after their organization they proceeded to contract for the enlargement of the building, and the improvement of the premises given the city by ALVAREZ FISK, Esq., making arrangements for the accommodation of pupils in seven distinct school-rooms, exclusive of a Hall sixty-eight by thirty-three feet, reserved for public exercises, the Library, &c. These repairs and improvements have been made with a strict regard to economy, and with a view to the most efficient course of instruction; affording well ventilated and healthful accommodations; with separate entrances, school-rooms and yards, for the different sexes; the whole cost of which, when fully completed, will be about four thousand dollars.

The plan of organization which we have adopted, arranges the pupils in two divisions, the male and the female; and each division in three departments, the Primary, Junior and Senior, with an appropriate teacher for each, and a Principal to exercise a constant superintendence of the whole. In the selection of the Principal and Assistant Teachers, the Board has exercised much care; and having been fully satisfied with their labors hitherto, they deem it fortunate, that among the numerous candidates for these stations, the present selections have been made. The office of Principal has been given to JOSHUA PEARL, Esq., whose practical experience and skill have been of the utmost importance in the organization and management of the Institute.

A code of rules for the government of both teachers and pupils, has been adopted, a copy of which is herewith presented for your inspection.

The selection of text-books for the several departments, a list of which you will find appended to the rules, has been a work of difficulty and labor; but we trust it has been done with such skill and judgment, as to afford important and solid advantages to the pupils.

Although preparations had been made early in July for receiving only a small number of pupils, the public expectation seemed to require, that the Institute should be put into immediate operation; and consequently it was publicly dedicated to the purposes of general education, on the fourth of that month, and on the 14th was opened for the reception of pupils.

The number of pupils admitted during the seven weeks of the summer term, which ended on the 27th ult. was

Number discharged,	267
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Number of present members,	359
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Of the eight pupils discharged, two have removed from the city, four have been suspended for absences, one for improper conduct, and one never united with the school.

The present number of male pupils is	198
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Do.	female	do.	161
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			359
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The number in the Junior Department of boys,	114
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Do.	do.	do.	girls,	80
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Do.	Primary	do.	boys,	84
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Do.	do.	do.	girls,	81
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				359
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The Senior Department has not yet been organized.

The number of pupils being much larger than was expected, the operations of the Institute have been embarrassed for want of the requisite quantity of furniture and books, and even now serious inconvenience is felt for want of books, but which we hope will soon be remedied by the arrival of supplies which have been ordered. These are provided at the expense of the Institute, and furnished to pupils at prices intended merely to cover all the charges, including stationery.

Furniture is also provided at the expense of the Institute; but the Board finding that this would require such a large appropriation of funds as to jeopard the success of the school, determined to require from each pupil the payment of two dollars to aid in defraying the expense, which will afford an amount insufficient for the purpose; and we are still without several articles of furniture which cannot be provided from the funds under our control at present.

To enable the teachers to carry out our plan of instruction fully, a supply of globes, maps and other apparatus is required, which would cost several hundred dollars, but which expense cannot be borne by the city appropriation of the present year.

A valuable Library, consisting of about twelve thousand volumes, has been presented by the "Natchez Library Institute," which is arranged, for the present, in the Hall; and donations have been made by B. L. C. Wailes and John Fletcher, Esquires, of a good variety of specimens in mineralogy, which will serve to form the beginning of a cabinet.

As some of the contracts for repairs and furniture have been completed, the Board deem it advisable to defer making a detailed report of expenses until the close of the year; but it may be stated that

The amount appropriated by the city is	\$6,000 00
Received from private subscriptions,	295 00
Do. from Adams county, (Literary fund,)	147 60
Do. from Independent O. O. Fellows,	100 00

Total amount of funds,	\$6,542 00
Deduct for building, say	4,000 00

This amount, say	\$2,542 60
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will be left for the current expenses of the Institute to the end of the year.

Our present experience enables us to form some estimate of the future expense of the school, and we are led to conclude, that it is not probable it can be sustained, with a sufficient number of well qualified teachers, for a less sum than six thousand dollars a year, for current expenses merely; and in view of the constantly increasing number of pupils, it is already apparent that a greater extent of accommodations will be required. The average number of pupils is likely to exceed four hundred, and they cannot all be accommodated in the present building without occupying the public Hall as a school-room, which would embarrass the course of instruction materially by depriving the various classes of its daily use in certain recitations and exercises, and interfering also with the weekly public rhetorical exercises, which the Board consider important.

The use of a public Hall for such purposes we deem essential to the prosperity of the Institute, without which our course of instruction would be incomplete, and its efficiency impaired; and we therefore take this occasion to suggest to your Board, that it will probably become a matter of urgent necessity, either to add two school-rooms to the building, and a proportionate space for a yard, or to divide the present Hall into school-rooms, and erect a building for a Hall and Library elsewhere. The whole expense of either plan would amount to what may be considered a mere trifle, when we take into view the objects to be attained by it,—the proper and thorough instruction of the youth of your city; and we are not yet without the hope, that the success of our experiment, and its influence upon the prosperity of the city and the wellbeing of its inhabitants, will stimulate able and liberal-minded citizens to contribute, voluntarily, the amount of funds required for this purpose.

Respectfully submitted:

A. P. MERRILL, President.

NATCHEZ INSTITUTE, September 2d, 1845.

EXTRACTS FROM AN
ADDRESS OF THE HON. J. S. B. THACHER,

MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

FELLOW-CITIZENS:—We have assembled to lay the corner stone of the system of Public Education among us. We have come together to congratulate each other upon the advent of this great public benefit. Since the invention of the art of Printing, no human institution is better designed to promote the improvement of mankind than that we are now here to welcome. The revelation of knowledge which the spirit of the age is making to every intellectual being, is second only to that divine revelation which is teaching every soul its immortal destiny. Too long the sun of knowledge has gilded only the high places of the earth, while the lowly valleys have slept in perpetual darkness. There, ignorance and superstition have too long encompassed their human worshippers,—the moral serpents of the intellectual Paradise. But that sun is now rising to its meridian, and its clear and brilliant rays begin to pierce alike the deep cavern's abyss and the peak of the mountain top. The monsters of error that have so long hung around the necks of man and breathed their subtle poisons into his ear, are hastening away before the lights of truth and knowledge.

We are not here, however, merely to speak the praises of knowledge and to enumerate and applaud the advantages of education. Upon these subjects we are all of one opinion. But there may be some who are yet undecided upon the policy of a system of Free and Universal Education. The objections of these are based,—some upon the prudence of the scheme itself, and others upon the embarrassed finances of the city, and the amount of taxation necessary for the support of such an institution.

By *free* education, we mean the education of all, at the public expense. It is intended to be free to all, just as the blessings of a good government are free to all, whether the individual pays much or little towards its administration. It is no system of pauperism, unless government also constitutes its citizens paupers. The sums of money annually raised for the support of jails and penitentiaries and all other institutions for the prevention of crime by means of its punishment, are cheerfully paid by every citizen. He is satisfied of the absolute necessity of thus protecting his property, liberty and life.

But it may be said, that government gives us all something in return, and that, while *all* of us pay a tax for the school, some of us have no children to reap the benefit of our contribution. Passing by all considerations of philanthropy, patriotism and contingent profit gained by the establishment of public schools, a reply to this objection, in its own spirit, is at hand. The experience of more than two hundred years in this country has proved, that the erection of such an institution in a city of this size, has invariably enhanced the value of property and the profits of the business of its citizens, in a fold far beyond the capital each thus invests. To such, I would say, a public school is a good speculation. A moment's thought will show this to be a fact. Parents, far and wide, will seek the best school for their children, especially when it is also cheap. Rents will rise, and then houses will be erected. In short, the population increases, which is always a sure sign of commercial, mechanical and general prosperity. It can be made clear, that there is a direct and positive profit derived by all by the starting of such an intellectual factory. Whatever, therefore, may be the burdens hanging over our city, and whatever pecuniary difficulties may attach to any of our citizens, the public school cannot justly be upbraided with increasing either.

It is also objected that the promiscuous collection of children of every character, the bad and the good, must create a moral atmosphere of conta-

gion. This objection plants itself upon the ground that evil alone is contagious. But why is it not as reasonable to hope that the bad will be reformed by the model of the good, as to fear that the good will become corrupt by the example of the bad? However, admitting the whole strength of the argument of the inherent proneness to wickedness in human nature, we do not mean to leave this vital subject in doubt of hope or fear. We are not now trying experiments with the human heart or intellect, but we are proceeding upon the steady basis of infallible experience. Education, fully accomplished, we conceive to be the perfect development of a man's physical, intellectual and moral capacities. It is to unite a sound body, a sound mind and a sound heart. Besides, it is not always that those who are styled the better educated are either the better men or the better children. We shall demand of our teachers, as all-important objects, to foster every virtuous disposition of their pupils, and to check every unworthy propensity. There is no security for virtue without the *trial of temptation*, and that will come, sooner or later, to all. It is better it should come while the feelings are susceptible, and while there is a watchful eye and an outstretched arm to clutch the victim from the sacrifice. We, ourselves, are but "children of a larger growth"—we are not equal in mental endowments or cultivation; we have not all the same strength of intellect or inflexibility of heart, and yet none of us would be willing to shut himself up from his kind for fear of contamination from his fellows.

Besides the animal instinct that urges every one of our race to toil for the means to preserve life, all are born with the germ of ambition to do something more. Hence the cause of all great public and private enterprizes, the eminence of the individual, the refinement of society, the grandeur and power of kingdoms and nations. With the scions of wealth, this ambition is often sated in its infancy and before the maturity of its nobler conceptions and more magnanimous achievements. The idolatry of the world for mere wealth satisfies in these the unfolded and yet feeble passion, which, not honored in others for the same cause, finally forces and compels applause in some other channel. Thus, it is our own fault that those whom fortune from their birth commenced to favor, are enticed from the brilliant career to which they were destined. But let the mass of mankind be educated; let it be converted from its blind adoration of the mere proprietor of money; let the golden idols be cast down, and on their pedestals be erected the paintings and the statues of the arts, and on their sites the temples of science and knowledge,—teach men to value the treasures of the mind and the jewels of the intellect more than hoards of coin and strings of precious stones,—and the worth of affluence to its possessor and its importance to society will become appreciated and experienced. Wealth is honorable, as it is made useful. When from its abundance, it is employed to diffuse intelligence and spread wide knowledge, or to accumulate them for its possessor, the talent is no longer hid in the ground.

Universal education is indispensably necessary, also, for the due progress of the arts and sciences, which it is our duty to promote. We every day boast of their rapid advancement, especially during the last half century, and in our own country. We delight to contrast our present perfection in arms, arts, sciences, letters, commerce, agriculture and government with their imperfect state while in the hands of our ancestors.

The apology which the moderns offer for this blindness of the ancients is their want of general education. Now, the existing state of the arts, sciences and knowledge is but improved, not perfect. Human genius and labor have but made a beginning. A procession of ceaseless successions of generations is appointed to conduct learning to its throne of power. The great world of knowledge is yet before us. Our age has stepped upon the shore, but its wide fields are uncultivated, its broad seas and extended rivers unexplored, its rich mines unopened. The countless and exhaustless

wealth of knowledge is yet unappropriated. The very earth we inhabit is but a map of deserts, rocks, burning sands and frozen seas, and the beings that tenant it but the heirs of sorrows, pains, wants and passions. Yet the little spots which skill and industry have already planted with fruits and flowers, are promises that Time in its fulness designs to reap a harvest from a garden of the whole globe. The few and incomplete truths already rescued from the present chaos of knowledge, advise us that there are others which are destined to revolutionize the entire physical and moral character of our race and to fit it for its highest usefulness and supremest enjoyment. The comforts, conveniences and luxuries that now surround us; the exquisite paintings and beautiful statuary; the delicious music that soothes the heart and elevates the soul; poetry, the melody of words and thoughts; eloquence, the grand lever that moves the moral world, are but specimens presented for our inspection and to invite our encouragement of their prime source and first cause, Public Education.

The form of government which we have adopted presents the subject of public education in a momentous point of view. The elemental principle and the whole plan of republicanism rest upon the great truth of man's capacity for his own government. This important political problem has received a triumphant solution. It would almost seem that our very uninstructed natures contained an instinctive appreciation of the leading truths of human government. Our land has already become not only the refuge of the oppressed every where, but the terror of oppressors under every sun. The still but forcible lesson we are teaching, is exhibiting its rich fruits in every empire, kingdom and state. The burdens that have long been imposed upon industry, the unjust and unequal laws and unreasonable severities that have harassed humanity, have been lightened and ameliorated. Yet we, ourselves, are standing only upon the sill of the door of the temple of Liberty. America, in its infant freedom, has but lisped to the shackled world her revelations in the great temporal religion of human independence. Tyranny, to be safe and successful, must chain its victims with ignorance. Liberty, to prevail to its utmost comprehensiveness, must educate and well educate her disciples. Restore to the children of our soil that education which opens to their view the whole amplitude of man's constitution, end and destination, and you will create a mighty moral influence, which though rising gently, like the light of the dawning sun, will have a whirlwind's strength to prostrate the tottering thrones of despots and the tribunals and strong holds of usurped and arbitrary power. And if every citizen of a free government is interested that every other citizen should be instructed, if the permanency and prosperity of republican institutions depend upon popular education, then the people have a right to demand it, and the government has a right to compel every individual to contribute to the universal establishment of schools and seminaries of learning. This is a law which never was enacted and can never be repealed by moral legislation. It asks no seal to give it authority, no signature to give it force. It came from God himself! It is the law of self-preservation and self-protection.

The system of education we are about to adopt has been found suitable to every people and every climate. In countries less free and less favored than our own, in Saxony and Prussia, great success has followed the experiment. No where, in our own land, has the attempt failed of prosperous accomplishment or permanency. The school-house standing upon the alluvial mould of Louisiana rears itself as proudly as the moss grown school-house built upon the granite rock of New England. The common schools of New Orleans commenced with thirty pupils and now number seventeen hundred.* There is nothing, then, in the manners or feelings of the people

*This eloquent address was delivered at Natchez in 1845. The N. O. schools now number 2600 pupils.

of the South hostile to this kind of institution. The dispersion of the population, found in a wealthy agricultural country, obstructs the plan, but does not defeat it. It would be extraordinary, if human skill could not remove this only difficulty. In short, the determination to fully effect this grand, this stupendous design of free and universal education is firmly made with full confidence and assurance. The impulse has gone forth throughout the world. The shivering infant of the arctic circle, the languid babe of the torrid zone, the child of the mountaineer, and the shepherd's boy of the valley are leagued in the holy conspiracy to share the spoils of knowledge. Its opponents could as well curb the course of an avalanche, with a cobweb's thread, as check this gigantic undertaking.

PARENTS:—The praiseworthy liberality of a respected fellow-citizen has bestowed upon Free Education a home and a dwelling place among us. The wisdom of our fellow-citizens has provided the annual means of its support. The Board of Visitors of the Institute has zealously occupied itself in procuring competent teachers, in compiling an appropriate plan of education, and arranging an approved system of discipline and school government. We think we have reason to repose full confidence in the integrity, gentlemanly bearing, literary accomplishments and experience in the business of his life, of him whom we have selected as the Principal of the Institute. We entertain a similar confidence in the merits of the subordinate teachers. The main and leading object will be to give to all comers, a good, useful and thorough general education. At the same time, we are prepared to lead the enquiring mind into the highest branches and to adorn it with all the embellishments of knowledge. We shall expect that parents will cordially accede to our rules of government and mode of instruction and co-operate with us in the common cause, confiding in our plans with trustfulness, not as being the arbitrary regulations of our opinions, but as a collection derived from a comparison of the whole present experience in the art of teaching. The instructor can do much, but the father and mother can do more. With their united efforts, no limit can be put to the improvement of the child.

CHILDREN:—Were it possible to add a higher zest to your enjoyment of this anniversary, the occasion which now calls you together alone should add it. On this day, your country's declaration of its independence in political rights was proclaimed. To-day, our happy city shakes off from its free limbs the rusty fetters of ignorance. Many of you, whom a munificent Providence has blessed with kind parents, with the means to command instruction and the intelligence to prize it, have not yet had your young hearts wrung with the sad spectacle of your mates less regarded by the countenance of a smiling fortune. That gloomy picture can now never throw its dark cloud over your joyous faces. Knowledge has been voted free among you. Some of you, whom an adverse fate had condemned to grope through a life of intellectual darkness, can now greet, with sparkling eyes, the break of a new day, brilliant with all that can illuminate the youthful mind and inspire the young ambition. This precious gift is the offering which your country and republican institutions present to their children. In return, they ask, they claim your best services. Live for them, and if need be, cheerfully die for them. A few rapidly fleeting years, to which you will soon look back as if to the familiar events of yesterday; will make you the guardians of your country's liberties and honor, and the trustees of the prosperity and happiness of the generation which will succeed you. Remember, that while, for the faithful performance of these great obligations, you will enjoy that best luxury, the proud consciousness of adding something to the glory of your government and the good of your race, your country spreads for your acceptance a table loaded with riches, honors and reputation. Great and good deeds, while they bear with them their own recompense, are sure to force a contribution of respect and reverence from every fellow being.

It is only the unworthy aspirant who exclaims that "Republics are ungrateful." No man can be superior to another without superior merit, and where merit is, no success is necessary for content, happiness or glory. Approach, then, with manly hearts, resolved to wrestle with the serpent, Ignorance, and a determination to pluck the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, which is planted in an Eden no longer forbidden to you. Before all things, cultivate Patriotism. In that single sentiment, is embraced all that is excellent in the individual, all that is eminent in the citizen, all that is illustrious in the statesman. But he who makes it a pretence, and a speculation for gratifying private ambition and promoting private interests at the public expense, is more despicable than the traitor in friendship or the hypocrite in religion. Let each of you endeavor to find out the errand for which he was sent into this world. The great Author of Nature formed you all for something, and, upon some of you, he has breathed a larger proportion of that etherial spirit which is designed to instruct, direct and govern your kind. Others may not yet have perceived it; you, yourselves, may not have felt it, but if the spark lives within you, and you add to it the fuel which education cuts out of the great forest of knowledge, floods and oceans of opposition and deluges of envy, malice and detraction waste their turbid inundations in vain upon the beacon which shall light up society and the conflagration which shall illuminate a darkened world.

FELLOW CITIZENS:—The Institution which we have now established is in harmony and keeping with the nature of things around us. Of education, it is the best and most perfect system at present known to man. Thus, here, art and nature have contended, in an amicable struggle, to load us with their best favors. A free and glorious government spreads its canopy over our liberties, as a calm and brilliant sky stretches its gorgeous and sparkling roof over the mild climate that makes our pleasant home. The fruits and flowers of spontaneous nature carpet our feet and hang in garlands about our heads. Surly Winter half smiles and modulates his rude blasts to music as he sweeps his hurried course over our blossoming fields. Gentle Spring and fruitful Summer, harbingers of plenty, ever pay their welcome visits and pour forth their annual tributes to industry and labor. Rapidly the children of the land spring from boyhood to youth and from youth to manhood. Quickly the new born mind grasps its matured powers and joins itself to the great concourse of those who direct and rule human destiny. If the people of a great State are bending together their united efforts to guide to its best end the unexampled resources of its soil, should they disregard the wants of a richer field, the cultivation of nobler fruits, the minds and hearts of immortal beings? Hitherto, among us, the efforts of teachers have been like voices crying in the wilderness; but, the way is now prepared, the system perfected, and there lives no Judas Iscariot to betray to crucifixion, Public Education, the moral Saviour of mankind. The Institution, which we have now baptized, is another stone added to the erection of that grand edifice which is to gather our race under one shelter of common fraternity and brotherhood. It is another rivet in the golden chain that binds us together as one people and a common family. It is a new impulse to hasten the time when Heaven shall once again kiss the Earth and reclaim her wandering sister.

Annual increase of the New Orleans Public Schools since their first establishment in January, 1842, when the schools opened with 26 pupils of both sexes:

In December, 1842, the number of pupils was.....	480
In December, 1843.....	1150
In December, 1844.....	1574
In December, 1845.....	1769
In December, 1846.....	1826
In December, 1847.....	2076

And the number now, at the date of this report, is 2601, of which 1448 are boys, and 1153 are girls.

THE SYSTEM IN PHILADELPHIA.

Extract from the letter of a writer, published in Neal's Gazette:

There is here a well defined system of responsibility. Nothing can be either done or left undone in any part or department of the establishment for which there is not some one accountable. And so thorough, minute, and comprehensive is the system that one of the professors told me the seats, tables, and furniture in his school room had been in constant use for ten years, and there was not so much as the mark of a pen or a knife upon any piece of it—a fact, I venture to say, without a parallel in the history of common schools.

In order to secure the highest efficiency of this system, every teacher and officer of the school is required of course to exercise the most unremitting vigilance, while the pupils are under the habitual necessity of exercising care, forethought, and circumspection. The principal personally visits every room many times a day. In short, the whole machinery of the school, in the language of the principal, is thrown over and around every pupil, like an extended piece of net-work, and made to bear upon him, not with any great amount of force at any one time or place, but with a restraining influence just sufficient, and always and every where present.

For the following statistical summary we are under obligations to the courtesy of the very able Comptroller of the State, Genl. Zollicoffer:

PRINCIPAL OF COMMON SCHOOL FUND.

The sum total of the *principal* of the Common School Fund of the State, which the Constitution prescribes "shall remain a *perpetual fund*," and "shall never be diminished by legislative appropriation," amounts to \$1,346,068 15; and is composed of the following funds, viz:

Investment in Stock of the Bank of Tennessee,	\$867,012 27
Investment in Union Bank Stock,	169,094 00
Investment in Planters' Bank Stock,	232,700 00
Investment in Farmers and Merchants Bank at Memphis,	700 00
Loaned to State and individual corporators in Nashville, Murfreesborough and Shelbyville Turnpike Co.,	40,348 33
Deposited in State Treasury and directed to be invested in Bonds of the State,	36,213 55
Total,	\$1,346,068 15

The dividends and interest annually accruing on these funds are directed by law to be paid into the Bank of Tennessee, to constitute a part of the contingent fund to meet the annual or semi-annual liabilities of the Bank and to extinguish accruing claims against the school fund.

In consideration of which, one hundred thousand dollars per annum of the dividends of the Bank, are directed to be set apart for common schools, and the faith of the State is pledged for the same. This sum, and others drawn from other sources, constitute what is termed the—

ANNUAL DISTRIBUTIVE SCHOOL FUND,

Amounting to about \$117,375 00 per annum, and which is annually apportioned and distributed among the counties, (and the school districts of each county,) according to scholastic population. This sum is usually composed as follows:

Of Bonus from Planters' Bank,	\$10,000
" Farmers and Merchants Bank, Memphis,	3,000
Dividend from Bank of Tennessee,	100,000
Specific sum in lieu of school land tax,	2,000
Bonus from Life and Trust Insurance Company,	750
" Marine and Fire " "	750
" Memphis " "	375
" Merchants' " "	250
" Clarksville " "	250

\$117,375 00

The entire scholastic population of the State for 1847 was two hundred and seventy-two thousand two hundred and forty-five (272,245, and the sum apportioned to each child was a fraction under 42 cents.

For the following statistical summary we are under obligations to the Com-
missioner of the very able Comptroller of the State, Genl. Nicholson.

PRINCIPAL OF COMMON SCHOOL FUNDS.

The sum total of the principal of the Common School Fund of the
State, which the Constitution prescribes shall remain a perpetual fund,
and shall never be diminished by legislative appropriation, amounts to
\$1,346,068 16; and is composed of the following funds, viz:

Investment in Stock of the Bank of Tennessee	\$500,010 27
Investment in Union Bank Stock	189,004 00
Investment in Planters' Bank Stock	232,700 00
Investment in Farmers and Merchants Bank at Memphis	200 00
Loaned to State and individual corporations in Nashville	

As a public school should be wholly independent of sectarian influences,
in order to provide against such and to harmonize all sects in the one great
cause of *Free and Public Education*, the Board of the Institute at Natchez
have adopted the following prayer, in accordance with sec. 2, article 5 of
the Rules.

PRAYER.

Almighty and everlasting God, from whom cometh every good and perfect
gift, grant thy heavenly grace to all of us who are here assembled; bless, we
beseech thee, the means which are used to train up the pupils of this school
in thy faith and fear; let thy good spirit assist their instructors to form their
minds in the principles of religion and virtue; bless them, O Lord, in their
studies; give them quickness to comprehend, and memory to retain, the in-
structions which they may here receive; make them dutiful and obedient to
their teachers, and humble and reverent to their superiors and elders; deliver
them from sloth, idleness and evil company, and help them daily, as they
grow in stature, to grow also in wisdom, and in favor with God and man.
Bestow thy choicest blessings, we pray thee, upon the parents and guar-
dians of these pupils, upon those who are engaged in the government of this
Institute, and upon all the people of this city; forgive us our sins, and final-
ly prepare us for everlasting happiness in Heaven, through Jesus Christ our
Lord.—AMEN.

A similar system will be adopted in the proposed Institute in this city.

Clarksville	250	..	..
Memphis	250	..	..
Marion and Pine	250	..	..

\$117,375 00

The entire scholastic population of the State in 1877 was two hundred
and seventy-two thousand two hundred and forty-five (272,245), and the sum
apportioned to each child was a fraction under 42 cents.

